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GUIDES 1 SIMPLIFIED INFORMAL CORRESPOND. SE

The cost to create a typical Government letter rises every year, as well as the cost to file and to dispose of it. Informal communication, resulting from the use of Optional Form 27, 2-WAY MEMO, can reduce these costs substantially.

Experienced letterwriters have observed the following about Government correspondence practices:

The bulk of correspondence is conducted within the governmental family—between offices whose day-to-day relationships could permit simple, informal written communication.

Many written communications are for immediate action, are routine in nature (such as requests for information or services), and do not require copies for distribution.

Many written communications are less than a dozen lines in length.

PRINCIPLES INVOLVED

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- 1. When agencies issue instructions encouraging the use of memoranda and informal correspondence within the agency, there is a noticeable drop in the communications effort and in the time required to respond to a request, as well as a reduction of useless copies in file. Examining the two types of correspondence shows that formal correspondence has certain drawbacks:
- a. Formal correspondence is usually more wordy because of salutations, introductory paragraphs, complimentary closings, etc. It becomes a difficult writing chore because of continual polishing and editing.
- b. Formal correspondence typically calls for more reviews, resulting in many rewrites and retypes, and for excessive time-in-shop.
- c. Formal correspondence goes through stricter clearance channels, and frequently makes communication between "opposite numbers" very difficult.
- 2. In many cases, the best reply is an informal endorsement on an incoming letter. Optional Form 27, 2-WAY MEMO, takes advantage of this principle.

PRACTICAL PURPOSES SERVED BY 2-WAY MEMO

- 1. The message and the reply are placed on the same page in brief, informal language. This simplifies writing, handling, storing, and disposing of short communications.
- 2. The message may be prepared by typewriter or by hand; the reply may be by typewriter, by hand, or by rubber stamp.
- 3. It is possible to achieve a greater delegation of signing authority with the 2-WAY MEMO because of its informal nature.
- 4. The 2-WAY MEMO may be designated for special handling. It may be marked URGENT if exceptional speed is required. It may be stamped for special mailing services. It may be used for classified material if it is marked with the proper security classification.
- 5. The "TO" line and the "FROM" line are so placed that the 2-WAY MEMO may be sent in a window envelope and returned in a window envelope, if desired.
- 6. The 2-WAY MEMO is particularly well suited for communication between "opposite numbers" within one agency or in different agencies.

The above guides have been prepared by the Office of Records and Information Management, National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration.

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Reply to Attn of :

Date :

Headquarters Expansion Project

Subject:

Added Security Fence/Notice of Changed Condition, CE #60

To **STAT**

New Building Project Office

Attention:

Forwarded herewith for your information and review is a copy of Centex's letter regarding a potential claim.

Any assistance that you might offer, if we are to attempt to refute this claim of "changed condition" will be appreciated.

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November 25, 1985

Arthur J. Carlucci, Project Manager New Building Project Field Office Room 3E40, Headquarters Building Washington, D.C. 20505



Re: CIA Headquarters Expansion

Bid Package 2 Langley, Virginia

Contract No. GS-11B-19066

Subj: Added CIA Fence Per Drawing

SF #1

Gentlemen:

Receipt is acknowledged of the GSA's letter dated November 19, 1985 and drawing SF #1 showing the Added CIA Security Fence on the west and south side of our building site.

Centex would like to go on record noting that the two fence areas (highlighted in yellow - see attachment) constitute a change condition to our jobsite and we have designated P-119 for our claim. This fence creates limited site access, added logistics and contributes to employee inefficiency and lack of productivity.

Very truly yours,

CENTEX CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, INC.

John Milhausen Project Manager

JM:sap

Enclosure

cc: Merrifield Office Proposal File P-119

